ASHIONS IN DEFEATISM, BY VAN WYCK BROOKS

# The Saturday Review of Literature

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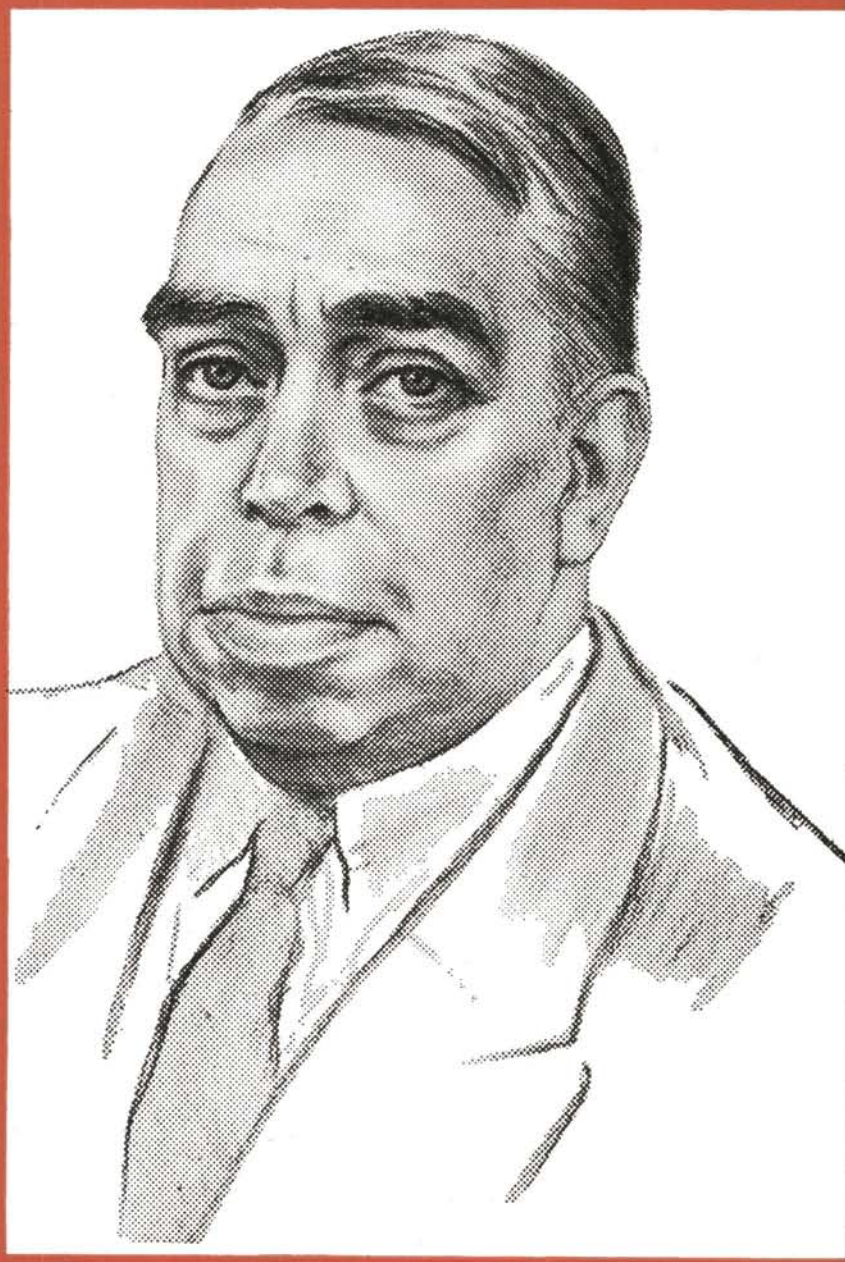

IRVIN S. COBB "never kicks up dirt behind him like a feist." *(See page 5)*

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*The Saturday Review of Literature*

# Fashions in Defeatism

VAN WYCK BROOKS

A MOOD of desperate unhappiness reigns in the world, and this is marked especially in most of the writers. Have you thought how strange it is that so much of the world swallowed Spengler whole?—and I do not deny that Spengler was a very great genius, I do not deny the reality of his intuitions. The temperamental cards of our time are all stacked in favor of despair, and a somewhat sterile despair. One error that an optimist makes destroys his whole case, while a pessimist can get away with murder. It seems as if our writers passively wallowed in misery, calling it fate; as if the most powerful writers, from James Joyce to Hemingway, not that nothing good exists, that only the ugly is real, the perverted, the distorted?

You know the picture of life you find in the novels of William Faulkner, Dos Passos, James T. Farrell, and so many others, who carry the day with their readers because they are writers of great power. They seem to delight in kicking their world to pieces, as if civilization were all a pretence and everything noble a humbug. There are teachers and psychologists who back them up.

But how can we ignore the larger questions involved in this drift of the modern mind? It seems to me it represents the "death-drive," as certain

**"A pessimist can get away with murder." Four of the darker-side novelists discussed by Mr. Brooks: William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, and James T. Farrell (left to right).**

from Eliot of "The Waste Land" to Eugene O'Neill and Theodore Dreiser, were bent on proving that life is a dark little pocket.

Influence in literature goes with intensity. The intense minds, good or evil, are those that wield the power; and the genius that has moulded the mind of the present is almost wholly destructive; and even where, as in many cases, these writers are fighting for social justice, they still picture life as hardly worth the trouble of fighting for it. Their tone is cynical, bleak, hard-boiled, hard-bitten, and life for them is vain, dark, and empty, the plaything, in Theodore Dreiser's phrase, of "idle rocking forces" or currents of material interest. What did Joyce's "Ulysses" say if not that life is a bad joke? What do our novelists say if psychologists call it, the will to die that is said to exist side by side in our minds with the will to live. Defeat and unhappiness can reach a point where we accept them and embrace them and rejoice in our enervation and disintegration. And whether we rejoice in it or not, this literature is disintegrating. "All that is ugly," Nietzsche said, "weakens and afflicts man. It reminds him of deterioration, of danger and of impotence. He actually suffers loss of power by it. The effect of ugliness," Nietzsche continues, "can be measured by the dynamometer. Whenever man is depressed, he has a sense of the proximity of something ugly. His sense of power, his will to power, his courage, his pride—they decrease with the ugly, they increase with the beautiful." That is what I mean by suggesting that all these writers represent the death-drive. And if, with their technical virtues, they destroy our faith, our will to make the world worth living in, we cannot let their influence go unchallenged.

Now, I have an instinctive will to believe in writers. Deep down below the level where I agree or disagree with them, I like and respect them because they are writers. In less expansive moods, I admit that there are rattlesnake writers, rhinoceros, hyena, jackal writers. There are literary Hitlers and Mussolinis, who are as useful to the race as a large and active copperhead in August. But writers, as a class, as I have known them, are sensitive, scrupulous men, lovers of justice and full of good will for other people. They are almost all idealists by instinct. And so, when I see great numbers of writers bent, as they seem to be, on destroying life, I ask myself, What are the reasons for it? Why do they see only the ugly in life? Why are they so cynical and fatalistic? And are they to blame for this, or are we to blame—we, all of us, society, the world we live in? Creative minds, of all minds, are those that naturally love life most. Obviously, these writers have been disappointed.

It is a commonplace that all these writers have expressed the state of mind of a world between wars. Thirty years ago, when I began to write, the future was an exciting and hopeful vista. Everyone believed in evolution,



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as a natural social process. We took the end for granted. Mankind was marching forward, and the only questions were of ways and means. I do not need to say how far the first world-war destroyed this happy vista. The young and sensitive minds who grew up in its shadow were utterly disillusioned by what they saw. They felt they had been betrayed, and, as evil triumphed, they came to feel that nothing else was real. This was the case all over our world, and the triumph of reactionary forces, in the years that followed, has gone very far to confirm this impression. We have witnessed every day the success of the powers of evil that have bragged and bullied their way towards the rule of the world. Everything good has been pushed to the wall, and even five years ago Bertrand Russell, speaking of England, said that no one could think of reform any longer, no one could think of anything but the approaching menace, the threat of these conquering forces that have darkened the world.

If, in this respect, we are relatively fortunate, our writers have shared this world-depression; and their cynicism has other local causes. The optimistic picture of our life that prevailed in the last generation led to a reaction that was automatic. It was too good to be true; and as Howells, for instance, could not bear to look at the ugly things in life, the ugly things in life became an obsession with the novelists who followed.

I THINK our generation will be remembered as the one in which everyone hated, often without visible reason, the town in which he was born. And the writers of whom I am speaking were obsessed with ugly memories, ugly as to material things and mostly as to spiritual. And I thought, Well, these towns were not founded with sensitive types in view. They were founded by aggressive men who were seeking an outlet for their primitive forces, and now the sensitive types have appeared and demanded their place in the sun, and their world is not ready to receive them. You know how Thomas Wolfe describes his country: "More land, more wooden houses, more towns, hard and raw and ugly. . . . Ugly disorder and meanness." The moral of his novel is the moral of hundreds of other American novels: "The great masculine flower of gentleness, courage and honor died in a foul tangle." We are getting in this generation the reports of writers who have seen nothing else but this rawness and hardness. And we are getting also the reports of the excluded, the children of our newly arrived foreign population, many of whom have seen little else in all their lives but the slums and mean streets of monstrous cities, who have often known here little but slights and indignity. How far, for them, has America been the promised land of which we heard so much before the war?

IT is the reports of all these classes that we are getting in our fiction—the excluded, the disinherited, and the hypersensitive types who have grown up in our less developed regions. Worst of all, we have been getting the reports of expatriates, whose prestige of late has been immense. And when I say expatriates, I mean the word in our sense—not the sense it has come to have in connection with refugee intellectuals. The expatriates to whom I refer are those who have broken with their group-life, by choice, on grounds of taste and taste alone. The prestige of Henry James rose with that of Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, Eliot, and various others. These writers, as writers, have great integrity, and they have made discoveries, both literary and psychological, that entitle them to much of their position; and you may say that where one lives is a purely personal question.

Is it possible to lay down rules about it? Certainly many writers have lived outside their country and served their country or the world better by so doing. Ibsen lived for forty years abroad, and he said he had never seen his home so clearly as from a distance and during his absence. But I do not think this is true for Americans, perhaps because our roots are not so deep as the roots of men of older countries. When we leave our country we are apt to leave our roots behind us, and we fail to develop roots in any other country; and what this means is that we miss the deeper experiences that give us a mature point of view. Missing these experiences, we live on the surface, and, having evaded life because we cannot master it, we end by denying its importance—we end by denying the importance of all the primary things of life.

You know how all these writers ridicule provinciality. But much of what they call provincial is basic in every civilization. No country could survive for six months without it. To escape from provinciality is good, provided we make distinctions; but, besides provinciality of place, there is also "time-provinciality," as Professor Whitehead calls it. This is the illusion that to be modern is worth all the other virtues; and the great effort of these writers is to represent the last minute, as if to keep up with the mode were more important than any of the great realities of life and death. They make much of

(*Continued on page* 14)

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# The Humor of The Self-Kidder

*EXIT LAUGHING. By Irvin S. Cobb. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co.* 1941. 572 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

THIS book is only incidentally the "life story" of Irvin S. Cobb. It is an adventure in humorous American humor. Taking it by and large, the humor in Irvin Cobb's autobiography, which bubbles like eternal Pierian springs on every page, is the humor of the self-kidder. He has a lot of stories about others, but if he laughs at a poor devil, it is only to reveal the fact that Cobb is not superior to the poor devil, but is his brother under the skin.

Mark Twain, at least in his earlier days, was a self-kidder. The travel stories of Mark Twain—"Roughing It," "A Tramp Abroad," "Innocence Abroad," "Life on the Mississippi," and his boys' stories, "Tom Sawyer" and "Huck Finn," were pure self-kidding, and throughout this entire book, Irvin Cobb walks under a fool's cap, with chalked face and broad pantaloons, the everlasting clown who, despite his ribaldry and laughter, is pictured here scrupulously if unconsciously a gentleman and a scholar and a judge of good whiskey. Indeed a judge of good whiskey, who is, for the purpose of this narrative, slightly squizzed, so that he paints himself in perspective and, as Kipling put it, "Stands beside and sees himself behaving like a blooming fool." Indeed, again to quote Kipling, this book was obviously written by the gentleman and scholar and judge of good whiskey, as the story of one who "sits in clink without his boots, beholdin' how the world was made."

The skeleton of the autobiography puts down the facts of the life of Irvin Cobb; born in the little town of Paducah, Kentucky, in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, just after the close of what, at that time, was known in the north as the Rebellion, later was called the Civil War, and now, in polite society, is referred to as the War between the States. The War between the States was a national episode now rapidly glimmering across twilight's purple rim of our history. It is becoming a national myth. But the setting of that period of reconstruction during which Irvin Cobb came into consciousness as a boy and acquired his prejudices of youth, formed everywhere west of the Alleghenys a back-stage setting. War overshadowed life in the American South and West in the '60's, '70's, '80's, and until the turn of the century. In this overshadowing of American life, the Confederate viewpoint, a nice blending of hiccupping nostalgia and conscious, deliberate, and downright self-deception, furnished the spiritual landscape of Paducah and points south of Kentucky to New Orleans, east to Charleston, and back to Louisville. As a Southerner—and he proves his right to be one by bragging on his ancestors for two chapters—Irvin Cobb comes in this book, and all of his books bringing something precious and lovable into American life and letters. Cobb came from a region in the United States, where wealth had been wiped out by the war, where poverty was a badge of honor. Indeed, the South developed a bumptious scorn of the acquisitive life, which the Yankee North was patterning for the whole country in the third quarter of the old century and in the first third of the new century. That bumptious Southern scorn of the acquisitive pattern of life is after all, the secret key to the understanding and enjoyment of Irvin Cobb's philosophy. That Southern attitude toward those predatory faculties of the Yankees in its very self makes for humor. A man who can look at a dollar without a spastic clutch for it it is, by all of the rules and tokens of the American game, slightly bughouse and conspicuously off his nut. So that Irvin Cobb, with the psychology of the busted South, coming into the American scene, north of the Mason and Dixon line, was laughable per se, ipse dixit, prima facie, and with all the giggleferious hereditaments thereunto appertaining!

Probably this attitude of absurdity which followed Irvin Cobb like a shadow molded his features. For his face provokes laughter in the mouths of the unthinking, who do not see that it is a serious, essentially sad, profoundly wise countenance. But some way Cobb can twist it, with scarcely a muscle's twitch, into a clowning grimace, without the slightest distortion. Mr. Cobb is known in his country as a humorist. But this story of his life as a newspaperman, from Paducah to Chicago to New York, from newspapers to magazines to books, and from books to the lecture platform to a place as a philosophic interpreter of our American scenes, is the story of a real man, a hard-working man, a conscientious man, tremendously impressed by the dignity and nobility of his profession.

*—From "Trees of Heaven."*
**Sorghum Making in Kentucky**

This man's story of "Exit Laughing" is well worth reading, even if it were without embroidery, even if it lacked the gay, galluptious felicitation which sparkles from every page. Obviously the man whose unconscious portrait of dignity and sense of righteousness is delineated in this book, just had to be the friend of great figures of his generation. And so, as they pass in review here in these happy pages, we see Cobb and his friends walking in beauty, side by side, from the 1890s to the last tick of the clock of the 1940's. Probably no other biography that has been published in many years contains such vivid portraits of so many important Americans as this story of Irvin Cobb's. They are vivid because he has seen them, not as remote figures, but as faces across a table—maybe a dinner table, maybe a poker table, possibly a council table.—He has seen them as friends, and he is certainly a friendly cuss. There is a strain of Newfoundland (and never poodle) in Irvin Cobb. Naturally, he never snaps, never barks, and never kicks dirt up behind him like a feist. He has aplomb and poise and carries his St. Bernard's rescuing whiskey flask to those in spiritual distress, with something like the sweet suavity of a duly registered practising angel. One can see that he brings out the best in his friends, and if he seems to be tromping through life on shell pink clouds of glory, with the rippling risibles of a happy humanity around him, it is because he makes his own environment.

I know of no book published in recent years which is so American as "Exit Laughing." Its humor is Falstaffian. Shakespeare, on the whole, laughed with people, and not at them, and the Shakespearian quality of these pages, even if sometimes the rhetoric is a bit stagey, somewhat consciously mirthful, still, at the same time, is honest. It is always kind and wise.

Certainly this book could not have been written in Continental Europe, much less printed there. For it represents laughter, in life and in democracy. Here speaks the American spirit whose "sense of humor saves him whole!"



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# The Story of Finland

*FINLAND FOREVER. By Hudson Strode. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company.* 1941. 443 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by GÖSTA LARRSON

THIS is a fascinating and comprehensive book about a gallant people in peace and war, a people who "seem to understand that spirit is fundamentally life's only substance and reality." With the chapter on Finnish history we are plunged into an absorbing account which mounts in interest as we read of the Russification of Finland under the last Czar. Throughout the book are scattered interesting word portraits of great Finns—composers, athletes, poets, and literary men. Unforgettable is the moving description of the courageous Kuusjärvi people. Yet the book offers lighter touches as well: consider, for example, the piquant episode of the mistress of Queen Wilhelmina's husband.

Mr. Strode gives a good account of the remarkable progress in agriculture, industry and export trade Finland made after 1919, also of the upward surge in living standards caused by the coöperatives, with the accompanying exhilarating effect on the people's morale. A special poignancy is lent to the story by our fore-knowledge that this peaceful land will in a few months be brutally attacked by the Soviet hordes. And we are constantly reminded of the close proximity of Russia; there's that interesting visit to "The Fateful Southeast" with its rotting summer residences of Russian noblemen murdered in the Revolution. Now, from watchtowers on the Russian side of the boundary line, silent sentinels stand on guard.

Toward the end of the book we are among the keen, rugged and hard-working Finns as the news comes that Hitler has seized Danzig and England has declared war on Germany. Having read thus far about a sane and sound people, the whipped-up Pravda stories sound grimly funny as they tell of the "sad plight" of the Finnish proletariat trampled underfoot, if you please, by the "war-mongering rulers." Hollow and pitiful seems the faked incident used by Molotov as an excuse for the attack on the Finnish Republic.

Hudson Strode

The Russo-Finnish war provides a stirring climax to this record. But when the author says that none of the three sister Northern countries *dared* stir to aid the fourth, we must take issue with him, for Leland Stowe's recent accusation against Sweden has roused fierce controversy on this very point. The calm strategy of the Swedish government provided for Finland a maximum of possible help. Facts disclose that by staying neutral officially, Sweden was able to send enormous quantities of arms, munitions and foodstuffs to the embattled Finns. By using the strategy of official neutrality, Sweden was able to help the Finns with more than $85,000,000 worth of material, 8,500 fully equipped volunteers, 200 doctors, 400 nurses, and 1,200 laborers to help with Finland's defense work. Mr. Strode says rightly that "it is possible that Sweden's official neutrality saved not only Sweden but Finland from destruction." Finland is still an independent nation; it has suffered grievously, but its population is not destroyed, and land ceded to an enemy—might be ceded back some day.

A knockout revelation comes in the afterword as one dazedly reads that "there was no Mannerheim Line."!

The book is not entirely without flaws, however. Some of the descriptions are a little long-drawn and tiresome, and too much trivial detail makes the volume longer than necessary. Yet, that is a minor thing. Mr. Strode has written an inspiring book about an heroic people caught by destiny at a crucial moment of its nation's history.

# Your Literary I. Q.

**By Howard Collins**

IF LITERARY CHARACTERS ADVERTISED

Let us suppose for a moment or two that certain famous literary characters have decided (and with what appropriateness!) to avail themselves of the advertising columns of *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Printed below are ten unclassified ads, some of which were actually run by fictional figures and some of which merely might have been. The names of the advertisers have been omitted, just to make it harder, but can you identify them anyhow? Allowing 5 points for each one correctly named, and another 5 if you recall the story in which each appeared, a score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 13.

DO YOU WANT someone to handle your business? Someone to take the dog for a run? Someone to assassinate your aunt? I will do whatever job you have to offer provided it has nothing to do with fish. 1

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LUMBER—The finest in Atlanta at bargain rates. Office and mill located on Peachtree road. 4

MY PATENT SMALL CLOTHES, trousers with a pneumatic inflateable seat, are a boon to those whose occupation is sedentary, a comfort to all travelers, indispensable to first nighters. 5

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WOMEN OF ATHENS, Sparta, Thebes, and Corinth! An important mass meeting will be held at dawn tomorrow in front of the temple of Pallas, at which time a plan to end the present war will be presented. 10



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# English Testament

*ENGLAND'S HOUR. By Vera Brittain. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1941. 230 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

MISS BRITTAIN has done another deeply moving book. It is not, of course, as great as her "Testament of Youth," which remains one of the three or four outstanding books of the first World War. That was the intimate picture of her own life in the maelstrom of that tragedy with its heartbreaking suffering and losses. In this new book she gives us the day by day picture of London and England from the beginning of the war. Others in plenty have written similar accounts of how England has been bearing up under the most horrible and cruel and inexcusable of assaults, but I have found no other that has brought it home to me and stirred me as much. Perhaps this is partly because I was in England at the outbreak of this war and I can therefore visualize some of the things Miss Brittain pictures as others cannot. At any rate, I found my eyes suspiciously moist several times, notably in her description of her parting from her two children when she sent them via Canada to the United States for safety. It would take a very hard-boiled person indeed to read her chapter and remain unmoved. I stood in several stations in London when they began evacuating the children at the outbreak of the war, and I thought I could imagine what it meant to the weeping mothers whom I saw bidding their children farewell.

But the value of this volume lies not merely in the earnestness and sincerity and the descriptive powers of the author. It is again a revelation of her own fine, noble, generously humane, and wise personality. There is no bitterness in the book, though she is deeply tempted to bitterness when she writes of the destruction of so much of the beauty and the history of England. "Tears," she writes," come into my eyes when I recall the grotesque transformation of lovely St. Clement Danes, the windowless arches of Westminster Hall, the roofless shell of Our Lady of Victories, the ugly fire-scarred ruin that was Turner's House in Cheyney Walk." But she is big enough to say: "When I look at the damaged face of Westminster Abbey, or the blackened shell of St. James's Church, Piccadilly, I am left with only the greater desire that our bombs may spare the Cathedral of Cologne and the Duomo in Florence. Beauty and history, whatever their locality, are the jewels of human civilization." When she wrote this book thirty-two London churches, among them a number of Wren's masterpieces had been wholly or partially destroyed, forty-seven seriously damaged, many more injured and defaced. With them England has lost "not dead monuments, but a part of the centuries which have gone to make England herself." She quotes one writer as saying that that can never be forgiven. She herself finds a different answer:

> I believe that we must indeed forgive; that if we do not, we shall sacrifice an essential part of our national quality.

If Miss Brittain's spirit does not control the next peace it will be lost as surely as the last was lost. But it is not only in her own words and her own attitude that this book brings us hope and cheer and faith; what she records of the heroism, the coolness, and calmness of all England under fire raises one's faith indeed, for here is the spirit triumphant over suffering, misery, wickedness, injustice, and death itself. Never was there a more wonderful illustration of what the human spirit is capable, never a more complete demonstration that a better way of life can be achieved if only human beings would set themselves to accomplishing it with the same glorious heroism and unfaltering determination to survive victorious which marks England at bay. Miss Brittain sees that very clearly, for when she was in her twenties she pleaded with her own people for a peace of justice and understanding in the spirit of Christ.

I hope Miss Brittain's touching and beautiful book finds its way into every library as the monument for generations to come of the very finest side of England, the England that come what may will live on.

*From "Their Finest Hour: First-Hand Narratives of the War in England." (Harcourt, Brace & Co.)*

**"Night Fighter"**

# Parson's Daughter

*"THERE'S ROSEMARY . . . THERE'S RUE. . . . " By Winifred Fortescue. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.* 1941 428 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

WINIFRED BEECH was the eldest daughter of a country parson in Suffolk, England. Her life, told here with charm, modesty, humor, and dignity, is a curious illustration of the part played by chance in human affairs. She was one of a large family: had beauty, a certain talent for writing, and gave pleasure by her very bad recitations to village rustics. Her father had an old Oxford friend who was vicar of Woodstock, near Oxford, and chaplain to the Duke of Marlborough. He was ill, asked Beech to take his place, and so Mr. and Mrs. Beech, who had a son at Oxford, went to Woodstock with Winifred, who was then seventeen years old. There Winifred made friends with the Duchess, née Consuelo Vanderbilt, and knowing her father's financial worries, consulted her about a career—and Consuelo advised the stage and helped her young friend to get a start.

The charm of Winifred Beech was evidently great; even the formidable Mrs. Pat Campbell fell before it; and while she was never a star, Winifred was leading lady on tour. Then, when she was twenty-five, she met John Fortescue, Librarian of Windsor Castle, author of the great official history of the British Army. Fortescue was over fifty, a confirmed bachelor, and a man of maddeningly regular habits which included leaping out of bed every morning at 6:30. He loved Winifred, was gallant, silent, and after three years of friendship, told her they had better part. She, who had loved him from the day of their first meeting, did not hide her bitter disappointment; the strangely matched pair married and had a wedded life of exceptional bliss, in spite of poverty, ill-health, and a good deal of incompatibility. These are the bones of this fascinating and beautiful record of a devoted life. Lady Fortescue has a rare gift for intimate writing; she never says too much, and she establishes a friendship with her readers which justifies her invitation to them to share her happiness and her sorrow.

The book is full of stories of the great and the well-known. Here the curious reader can learn how Queen Mary took the part of a grasshopper in a charade portraying the entrance to Noah's Ark; how round the bracket of the alabaster Venus in Thomas Hardy's house hung a card saying



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"When dusting, please *blow* but do not touch"; how a dipsomaniac monkey, belonging to a niece of the Governor of Gibraltar, was found in the Governor's hammock "lying between the sheets . . . by its side an empty whiskey bottle and clutched in a small paw—believe me or not, this is the truth—an empty bottle of Aspirin tablets". . . . "This extremely human behavior of the monkey's undoubtedly saved its life. Instead of being shot at dawn, it was presented to a ship, and the last news of it was that every night in the Officers' Mess it drank them under the table."

But I think my favorite story concerns a time when Lady Fortescue was ill and in a high delirium. It was before her marriage, and she was at home with her mother.

Mummie told me afterwards that I puzzled her by repeating over and over again: "Is this h'all, H'Albert? Gawd's truth! This here's a bloody feeasco," which was the sergeant's version of Queen Victoria's remark when she was taken on board the wrong ship to review the remnant of troops which has been engaged in the battle of Balaclava, and, by mistake, was shown only four soldiers of another regiment.

# Stories and the Universal

*TEN HEROES. By David Malcolmson. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* 1941. 307 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THIS is a highly original and stimulating book, which should interest any one who is interested in books at all. Mr. Malcolmson inquires into the problem of why certain stories move us profoundly, or are again and again successful in different versions, and whether any universal relation can be among these stories. It is his belief that these stories which have a universal appeal are those which reflect symbolically the experiences of Everyman, so that every one can see himself as their hero. He has found five such experiences, and has turned them out to produce ten, for as he says every hero may be a villain when looked at from another angle. Thus he takes Cinderella as the child of nature and of instinct, whom the universe intervenes to help just because she is true to herself and is otherwise helpless, and makes her a type of all the types of all the divine simpletons from folklore to Dostoievsky. But against her he sets the other folk-hero, Reynard the Fox—and, one immediately perceives, Odysseus and Ashiepattle Who Cheated the Devil (it is a part of the charm of the book that it sets one's mind working with the author and supplying examples of its own). For a reliance of instinct, or the unconscious, of the *daimon,* and the use of the intelligence, are both necessary to the complete man.

Similarly, Mr. Malcolmson takes four other complementary pairs of heroes, and applies their stories to literature as diverse as Popeye the Sailor and Proust. Once at least the reader may well feel that the symmetry of the author's plan has misled him. One of his pairs has on one side the Prodigal Son (the return to childhood of Proust and Thomas Wolfe) and on the other side the escape from the Devouring Mother, the Freudian conception which is made the explanation of the appeal of all stories of escape, even the one Mr. Malcolmson selects for his type, Sindbad the Sailor and the Old Man of the Sea. Surely it is hardly necessary to bring in the Freudian mother to explain the pleasure we feel in seeing a man escape from danger; the escape from danger is itself a fundamental experience, and as far as ancestral memories go, one which goes far back into the animal past of the race, to a point long before mother-love becomes possessive. Mehitabel the Cat says "I believe in having 'em and loving 'em and letting 'em alone," but Mehitabel, in her checkered life, must have often known the pleasure of escaping up a tree.

But a part of the pleasure one takes in the book comes from its stimulus to disagreement, as well as from agreement. It is a wise book, but its wisdom lies not closing questions but in opening them. And it lies also in the many casual comments by the way, which again stir the reader to a really cooperative agreement or disagreement.

*Victor Kraft*

**Jesse Stuart**

# Tales of the Hills

*MEN OF THE MOUNTAINS. By Jesse Stuart. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.* 1941. 349 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JONATHAN DANIELS

IN these twenty-one tales and sketches of his Kentucky hills Jesse Stuart has written again — and beautifully—not merely of the same difficult and beautiful country but of those same themes of quick youth and inevitable age, of the different fruits which may be expected from the fields clean-cultivated and those left by laziness to the weeds, and of the same green acres by the country church which wait for all. In them again are lusty boys and girls, old folk contemplating mortality, the girl with the corn-colored hair, and the citizen who blows the breath of rot-gut whiskey out of a mouth full of decayed teeth. No man writing in America has restricted himself so closely to one scene, one same though diverse set of people, as Jesse Stuart has. The continuing vitality of the Greenup County stories is that they are written in terms of the Greenup earth about the world. His rich poetic realism does not inform us about the mountain folk but about ourselves.

These new stories are all excellent additions to the sum of Jesse Stuart. Young Shan Powderjay, who is the story teller and hero of many of them, is another of Stuart's young men who come not only to love and frolic and fox hunt but also to a sensitive understanding, expressed in the good and grim details, of hard country existence, of the full-bodied taste of life. But Shan lives in a world of wise-talking old men, of men caught in comic postures in mountain politics and feuding, of pretty women and silly ones and old ones with pipes in their mouths. Not one of them is merely mountain quaint. None of them are people apart. The universal language of drama is in their dialect. Nevertheless, none of them seems new. They are the same people Jesse Stuart has shown us before, speaking the same poetry, the same comedy and wisdom. If this collection of stories, as it seems to me, only adds to the quantity of Stuart's work, it still adds to the quantity of some of the richest native writing being done in America.

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Houghton Mifflin Company announces its seventh annual Literary Fellowship Awards. Fellowships are $1,500 each, one for fiction and one for non-fiction, and are given on the basis of work in progress. Applications should be filed before September 15, 1941.



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# Lanny Budd Carries On

*BETWEEN TWO WORLDS. By Upton Sinclair. New York: The Viking Press.* 1941. 859 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by HARRY THORNTON MOORE

UPTON SINCLAIR'S sequel to "World's End" again deals with the experiences of Lanny Budd, the illegitimate son of an American munitions maker: this time the story is swung between the 1919 Peace Conference and the 1929 market crash. Lanny, after leaving the Conference in disgust and returning to his mother's villa on the Riviera, finds it hard to remain detached from world affairs, for the involvment of his friends and the partiality events themselves seem to have towards Lanny keep him continually entangled. Once he is even expelled from Italy for political reasons.

The story throughout presents the dilemma of the man of good will in our time: art plays an important role in Lanny's case, for both music and painting are leading factors in the lives of those about him and blend into the life of leisure and plenty of laissez-faire which Lanny's mother and his high-caste French mistress try to hold him to (succeeding except for Lanny's intermittent outbursts into "pink" utterance and activity). Lanny's situation is greatly complicated, shortly before the end of the book, by his marriage to the most fabulous of American heiresses. She is an excellent girl, and the two of them beat down the early difficulties created by her marriage to a man of merely moderate wealth. The reader by this time knows Lanny well enough to be aware of "the worm in the bud" and to wonder what Mr. Sinclair's next installment (and the 1930's) will do to this marriage.

The preceding volume had the advantage of being built around the Peace Conference which dominated the last third of the book. Here the action is more scattered, and although it is impossible not to appreciate Upton Sinclair's shrewd insight into recent history it is also impossible to refrain from observing that his hero has to be the most incredibly opportune of all tourists to be in Rome the day Matteotti is kidnapped, in Munich during the Beer Hall Putsch, in New York at the time of the stock market catastrophe, and so on. To make Lanny's experience of the epoch complete, he must have no less a person than Isadora Duncan throw herself at him with the cry, "You have thrilled me to my deepest recesses!"

All the episodes of this too episodic novel are not so inept, however; some, such as Lanny's painfully exciting elopement with the heiress, display the author at the top of his story-telling skill. But Upton Sinclair has a lesson to learn which should also be learned by Robert Briffault and Compton Mackenzie, who have been writing novel-sequences amazingly similar to this one in structure and scope. The lesson is that in these tremendous attempts to convey so much of the life of a period, the single hero who remains as consistent story-center cannot successfully unify so much mass: this was known by Balzac, Tolstoy, and Proust, the three greatest novelists who have used the big social canvas

*Drawing by Alloro*

**Upton Sinclair**

# Sir Edward Leithen, Lawyer

*MOUNTAIN MEADOW. By John Buchan (Lord Tweedsmuir). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1941. 272 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by KENNETH P. KEMPTON

A GOOD many of us will remember a little middle-aged greengrocer of Glasgow, suddenly fed up with all that, shutting his shop one fine morning and setting out on the high road, to become embroiled with boy scouts and Russian *émigrés*. From the gentle humor of "Huntingtower" to the high emprise of the Hannay supermen and "Mountain Meadow," John Buchan's tales have been consistently charming and competent. Now that his work is done, we have some thirty books, none rising to greatness but all of them on a remarkably steady level of great reading.

The romancer's notion of plausibility is simply a little broader than the workaday realist's. Instead of shunning chance as suspect, he calls it "the poetry of circumstance" and uses it as a legitimate force in his portrayal of life not as it is but as it might be. Simply rub the lamp, anything may happen and usually does. Escape, by all means. Time and space mean nothing, anything can happen here, today. This trick is common enough in fiction factories, but a rare gift in the hands of a conscientious craftsman, a man possessed of ideas. John Buchan is one such. Few writers nowadays would have the temerity—your plot-pinching realist would call it sheer gall—to start off a protagonist under sentence of "a year to live"; send him half across the world in search of a man neither he nor the reader has ever seen, simply to oblige a friend and because he wants to die on his feet; or let him meet (with anything important hanging on the meeting) another friend's cousin in Arctic Canada hundreds of miles from nowhere. John Buchan does that in "Mountain Meadow," as he has done it many times before. And just as before, after fifty pages all real-life bets are off and to stop reading becomes inadvisable.

This time it happens to Sir Edward Leithen, wealthy bachelor, distinguished lawyer, sometime Attorney-General, and agnostic. Gassed in the First War, he has developed tuberculosis. An American friend in London reports that his nephew, a young French-Canadian removed to New York, happily married, successful in banking, has inexplicably disappeared. Leithen takes up the challenge with pathetic eagerness. He strikes the trail by talking with young Galliard's wife and friends, visits his boyhood home in the Laurentians, and from there moves west, then north, first by plane, then by canoe, finally on foot, into the little-known region between the Mackenzie and the Yukon, where the northernmost Rockies tower into implacable sky. Galliard has a half-breed guide with him, Leithen has the guide's brother and two Indians. They find Galliard first, but he has gone mad; his return to sanity becomes dependent upon finding Lew Frizel, the guide. More than half dead, Leithen goes on alone, just ahead of the winter.

John Buchan has always been best in vast places "filled with God." He has never had happier material than the Sick Heart valley, end of the quest. He may prove the last of a distinguished line, but there is nothing whatever *fin de siècle* about him. This is a gallant and a fitting last try at what Stevenson called "awful fun."



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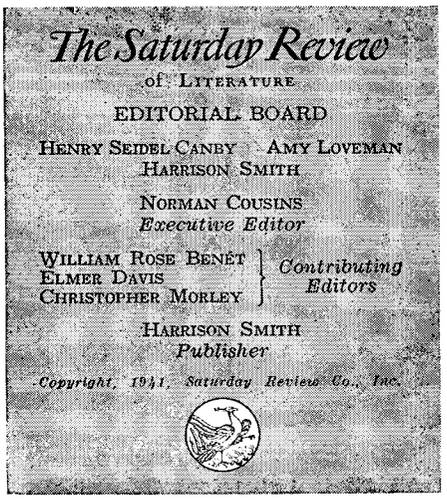


## SHERWOOD ANDERSON

SINCE Sherwood Anderson's death so much has been published about his life that readers must be familiar with the strange circumstances under which he began his literary career. Never mind the exact story, which is picturesque in all its versions; what is significant is that this gifted man, in middle age, and with no formal training for his career, suddenly stepped out of business and a bourgeois security into the uncertainties of creative literature—and won. He won, but not along all fronts. As a short story writer he reached the top rank of Americans, and indeed of all contemporaries; as a novelist his inspiration frequently failed, and his sense for communication (which is what rhetoricians call form) proved inadequate. And his faculty of imaginative observation soon began to weaken, so that he became, first, a writer of memoirs, then a journalist, then an editor content with routine.

In all this he resembles many Americans whose genius has felt sooner or later the lack of the props and the frames of reference of an adequate education. More education would not have given them more genius, yet it would seem that more education would have enabled them to make a greater and a longer use of their gifts.

But there is another aspect of this problem of the self-educated author where we can be more definite. Anderson belonged to that group of "powerful uneducated persons" in which one can number (in their origins at least) possibly Lincoln, probably Mark Twain, certainly Walt Whitman. To put it a little differently, and perhaps more accurately, these characteristic Americans have been more concerned with life than with literature. Whitman's hope was to create a cosmos in which democratic man in all his aspects would reveal his significance to the reader. *All* that could be said effectively about democratic man belonged in the total of his work, which was more important than all of its parts separately regarded. Among these parts might be great poems, experimental sets of rhythmic lines, melanges of prose or poetry, and plain and often not very good prose. It was the total in reference to life that counted. What was represented, what was said, concerned Whitman, and where his genius was not afire the most he could achieve was to be articulate. Since, when his inspiration was warm, he was a great poet, many of Whitman's Leaves are great poetry —but it was the whole that seemed to him vital. His self-education left him insensitive to a lack of art in many a sub-section of his cosmos.

Sherwood Anderson also was trained by experience, not by books. It was not until middle age that his imagination filled up and, like an unmilked cow, began to demand relief. When he wrote, it was to get what seemed to him a new, unexpressed life into communicable form. Like Whitman, he made his own moulds into which to cast this fresh observation. Sometimes they were good sometimes not. His failures were more egregious, his successes more enduring, than those of his book-trained contemporaries.

His career is no argument against a wide knowledge of literature in the writing man. It was such a career by necessity as has belonged particularly to the up-and-coming nation of the Americans in a fluid society, where an easy access to literacy has made the powerful common man ambitious and adventurous beyond his contemporaries elsewhere. It was the career of a man who had to choose between life and literature, and chose life. Vachel Lindsay had such a career. Many other names could be added.

One can safely prophesy for the best work of Sherwood Anderson (not much in quantity), as one can safely prophesy for the cosmos of Whitman, a long endurance in our literature. They went to nature, as Pope advised, for their material, and this time it was a real nature, a new nature, not a view of the world through the frames of the classics. Men and women were their books, which made success very much more difficult, but unique when it was attained.

H. S. C.

## ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

IT was the peculiar grace of Elizabeth Madox Roberts, whose death the other day deprived American literature of a writer skillful both in verse and prose, that she could deal with the tragically meager life of the underprivileged without making it wholly sordid. Her first, and best, novel, "The Time of Man," in its depiction of the Southern mountaineers, reflected a manner of living that was pinched and ugly and pitifully precarious but which, in the person of her heroine at least, was redeemed from unadulterated misery by a certain valor of emotion. The novel won dignity from an almost Biblical cadence and turn of expression, but more than that it had a lovely lyrical quality in its rapture of delight in nature and in its deep-seated sense of an iridescent and pervasive beauty in the world. Miss Roberts never achieved in any of her later novels the same pregnant philosophy of life that her first book showed; indeed, as she went on her work became more and more tenuous. But at her best, in "The Time of Man," she struck a richer note than most of her contemporaries who like herself were attempting to depict life in unvarnished colors. In that book she added to our regional literature a volume of distinction.

A. L.

# Should It Be Night?

**By Ben Ray Redman**

WE have been waiting for this end so long,
Our numbness mocks the arrows and the spears:
Feeling itself has bounds: the heart's frontiers
Set limits to the hurt. Were we but strong,
Stronger than stuff of mere mortality,
Then might we prove the equals of this trial:
Take agony's full measure: drain the vial:
In very anguish find our victory.

But all those little deaths that we have died,
With their spaced headstones—China, Munich, Spain,
Belgium and France—have, from our bleeding side,
Morsel by morsel parcelled out our pain.
Richly to cease, while spending all, were brave:
Sapless the vine that marks a pauper's grave.



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## As the Author Sees It

SIR:—The reviewer of my book "Americans" calls my characters smug. I never thought I much liked smugness, but I realize now that I rather admire it when represented by such people as Michael Shadid who has defeated all attempts of the medical tories to kill his community hospital and has made it a real part of the lives of the farmers of western Oklahoma, Dorothy McFaddèn who is working her head off to keep Junior Programs alive, Dave Berger the shirt manufacturer of St. Louis who spends his spare time pulling kids out of the gutter, Henry Cohen the hard-working rabbi of Galveston, and Howard McKinney who has put community pride and self-respect into two thousand Negro kids on the Hill in Pittsburgh.

WEBB WALDRON.

Tucson, Ariz.,

## "Watson Was A Woman

SIR:—I was charmed and entertained by Mr. Stout's recent article proving that Dr. Watson was really a woman [*SRL,* March 1].

Mr. Stout's evidence was persuasive and brilliantly handled. However, he omitted one bit of extremely significant proof which I should like to call to his attention.

Dr. Watson's full name is given at various times as John H. Watson. But in "The Man With the Twisted Lip" he referred to as "James"; (Page 259 of "The Complete Sherlock Holmes").

It is of course impossible to imagine any man under any circumstances making a mistake, or becoming confused about his own first name. It is, on the other hand, quite probable that a woman who was using a man's name as a pseudonym, would make such an error. The mistake, in fact, could be made by no one but a woman in such circumstances.

RICHARD HANSER.

Malverne, L. I.,

## "How Poetry Is Published"

SIR:—Let me congratulate you upon the publication of William Sloane's "How Poetry is Published" [*SRL,* Mar. 15]. Mr. Sloane has the advantage of being both an author and a publisher, and thus his paragraphs have a particular point and cogency.

I think, however, he makes scarcely enough of one point: the publisher's "good risk" in signing up a new poet who, even if his poems never earn a profit, may turn into a profitable writer of prose. Mr. Sloane mentions a few of those excellent writers who began as poets. The list might well have been extended. Among those now established authors who either began as poets, or who wrote volumes of poetry early in their careers, are Willa Cather, who anticipated her analytical fictions with the idyllic and lyrical "April Twilights"; Irwin Edman, who made his shy début with "Measures of the Moment"; James Branch Cabell, who invented a whole anthology of minnesingers in "From the Hidden Way"; Herbert Gorman, who preceded his voluminous biographies with at least two volumes of poems; and that anti-poetic scoffer H. L. Mencken, who made his entrance into the arena clad in nothing more belligerent than a slender sheaf imprinted "Ventures into Verse."

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

Elizabethtown, N. Y.

**"I've just been drafted. What have you got on blowing bugles by ear?"**

## Information, Please

SIR:—I am at work on a biography and study of Edwin Percy Whipple, 1819-1886, Boston critic and lyceum lecturer in many cities and colleges, an original member of the Saturday Club, and intimate of most of the Boston-Cambridge-Concord circle.

Perhaps readers can assist me in locating surviving members of Whipple's family, or of his wife's—Charlotte Hastings Whipple. I should like to hear from any who have letters or manuscripts of Whipple, or who know of letters in which he is mentioned.

L. A. PEACOCK.

State College, Penn.

## "Literary Prophecteering"

SIR:—Mr. Bloom's "Literary Prophecteering" [*SRL,* Feb. 1] calls to mind a statement by the historian, Mr. Poultney Bigelow, given to reporters on his return from an annual visit to ex-Kaiser Wilhelm in March, 1939, and released by the Associated Press March 22. Mr. Bigelow, who was then 84 years old, was quoted as saying that an Anglo-French-Balkan bloc could not stop Hitler even with the aid of Russia, and that Hitler would conquer Poland and "dictate the peace of Europe." He also predicted that the Germany monarchy would be restored with the infant son of Prince Louis Ferdinand, grandson of the former Kaiser, on the throne.

IRA P. BAUMGARTNER.

Clarkson College of Technology
Potsdam, N. Y.

## Research in Progress

SIR:—Thank you for the encouragement given me by your editorial of February 22 mentioning the Channings as fair game for the biographer.

I have been at work on the life of the younger W. E. C. for a number of years, with the hope of submitting it as a dissertation at Columbia. Professor Ralph L. Rusk and the Channing family have been good enough to give the project their several blessings. Although I staked my claim some years ago in *American Literature's* "Research in Progress," I take advantage of every opportunity to mention the matter. There may be room for several of us under Channing's green umbrella. But at least I should like to talk with anyone else who has a similar plan.

FREDERICK T. MCGILL,
*Assistant Professor of English.*

University of Newark,
Newark, N. J.

[*Editor's Note: Would readers welcome a column on "Research in Progress?"*]



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# Mississippi Demagogue

*FROM HELL TO BREAKFAST. By Edward Kimbrough. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.* 1941. 384 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM JAY GOLD

GRANT me that the demagogue is not uniquely a Southern phenomenon, and I will admit that the South's demagogues have a flamboyance clearly regional in origin; grant that the people everywhere in this country can be and frequently have been bamboozled in politics, and I will agree that the South's poor whites and Negroes are our largest disfranchised group; concede that we have all about us budding vigilante groups that may someday form an American fascist élite, and I will agree that the South so far has had an unpleasant lead in the organization of such groups. In short, grant a sense of proportion, a national frame of reference, and we can proceed to a consideration of Edward Kimbrough's "From Hell to Breakfast."

This first novel is a portrait drawn from life of a Mississippi demagogue, Gus Roberts, who came out of the fields to become an evangelist, a state senator, governor, and finally United States Senator Gus Roberts. He stands for a Methodist (and Baptist) God and a white man's country; he promises twenty-cent cotton and a dispersal of the Wall Street Jews; he is the author of a bill to ship the Negroes back to where they came from; he is in public a prohibitionist and in private a connoisseur of good corn liquor; he cherishes and protects Southern womanhood while he carries on numerous amours, including one with the mistress of his hometown's bawdy house; he stands for the working man and organizes the White Knights to break up labor unions; he lies, cheats, prays, and swears in the same breath; he worships only power and himself.

Edward Kimbrough

"From Hell to Breakfast"—the phrase is taken from Mississippi political lingo: "I'll fight it from Yellow Rabbit to Vinegar Bend, from Hell to Breakfast"—finds Gus Roberts running for reëlection as United States Senator. He is opposed by the Mayor of Hazelville, whose rascality almost matches his own, and by Jerry Clinton, the son of his best friend. Jerry has been "spoiled by radical teachers at Harvard." The "CFO" (why the thin disguise?) complicates the campaign by working into Mississippi, currently in the throes of much labor trouble, and organizes for Jerry's election. Gus's wife divorces him, to the scandal of his Baptist and Methodist constituents; his daughter Julia comes out publicly against him and announces her engagement to Jerry; the Senator gets shot in an embarrassing spot under embarrassing circumstances. Through it all Gus makes speeches, ladles out liquor, and pays for permanent waves to win sharecroppers' votes, blustering and praying and pleading, turning everything to his advantage.

Mr. Kimbrough knows all this sordid business at first hand, and his story has an unmistakably authentic ring. When he describes a political rally, a Negro voodoo session, or an evangelist's tent meeting, his writing is vivid, dramatic, and effective. At such times there is both movement and color in the novel. There are too many places, however, where the writing is a static monotone. Partly responsible for this is an injudicious use of dialect which impedes the story's progress, and in any case, is neither consistent nor effective. The characterization, too, is weak, mainly because all attention is centered on Gus to the point where his portrait becomes a caricature. The others are sketched in flatly and far too simply to be convincing.

Nevertheless, "From Hell to Breakfast" is a good job of reporting, done with sincerity and vigor.

*William Jay Gold is Managing Editor of the* Virginia Quarterly Review.

# Author, Author!

**REFUGEES and Stockings.** *Otto Eisenschiml* ("Why Was Lincoln Murdered?" "In the Shadow of Lincoln's Death") is a highly successful business man as well as a writer. Himself a chemist, he now heads an oil business. It is said that he started with a capital of $70 and now has a million-dollar turnover. Mr. Eisenschiml is famous for his charities. At present he maintains a hundred refugees from Europe. To help them he supports various businesses in which they are engaged: a pastry shop, a bridge parlor, an amusement bureau, among other things. As soon as one of the group gets a chance at a job he withdraws and makes room for another refugee. In his own offices, Mr. Eisenschiml pays all the girls who work for him $35 a week. Any girl may take a day off at any time, provided some other girl in the office agrees to do her work, and provided she makes a small gift to the substitute. Mr. Eisenschiml serves breakfast to all his employees. He also keeps on hand a supply of silk stockings in case any employee gets a run.

★ ★

**In Their Spare Time.** A lot of business men besides *Otto Eisenschiml* turn author in their off hours. Last year *Walter Hoving,* of Lord and Taylor, produced "Your Career in Business." Three busy executives have books on this spring's lists. *Frank Altschul,* senior partner of Lazard Freres, investment bankers, investigates war and revolution in "Let No Wave Engulf Us." *Alfred P. Sloan, Jr.,* chairman of General Motors, describes his own career in "Adventures of a White Collar Man" (he had a collaborator in *Boyden Sparkes*). And *John Klampner,* treasurer of a large New York chemical company, has turned out, writing nights and holidays, three novels in the last four years, the most recent one being "Another Night, Another Day."

★ ★

**From France.** *Jean Cocteau,* who, back in the early '30's, described his experiences as an opium smoker in "Opium, the Diary of an Addict," is said to be again taking the cure. He's living in Paris. So is *André Gide,* who contributed an article very careful of the feelings of the invaders to the first number of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* to appear since the Nazi occupation. *Paul Morand* had an article in the same issue of the magazine. At her home in unoccupied France *Gertrude Stein* isn't having a bad time. She writes: "We are living a cheerful pioneer life over here and we like it. I am writing steadily and the sun shines quite a lot and the snow is melting and the feeding complicated but not impossible."

EUGENE ARMFIELD.



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# "Unsuccessful Neurotic"

*NIETZSCHE. By Crane Brinton. Harvard University Press.* 1941. 266 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JACQUES BARZUN

FOR the past ten years, Professor Crane Brinton has been most effectively putting at the service of the general reader his stores of historical knowledge bearing on contemporary questions, and his great talents as a writer of lucid prose. His three volumes on revolution, eighteenth century and modern, his superb study of the political ideas of the English romanticists, and his "Lives of Talleyrand" prove, among other things, that a gifted teacher and writer can modulate from the monographic study of records to the composition of entertaining biography without losing, at either end, his scholarship or his chosen public.

In the present work on Nietzsche, Mr. Brinton comes closer than ever before to the centre of the contemporary maelstrom, but there will be few to say that he has been pulled under. As he promises in his Preface, he does not use Nietzsche to indict the German nation, and his best chapter—on the uses to which Nietzsche has recently been put by the Nazis—is indeed a balanced summary. It is not Professor Brinton's fault if, as is stated in the title of the series of which this book is the first, Nietzsche belongs with the Makers of Modern Europe.

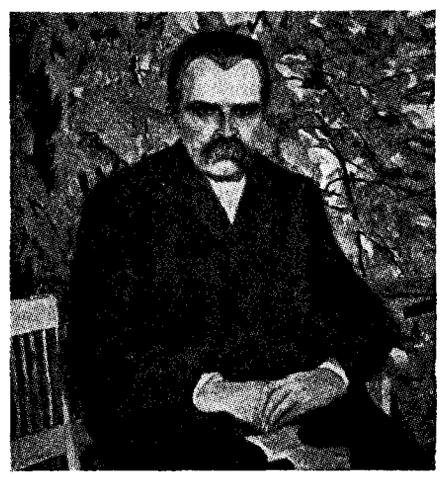
This same fact constitutes his biographical problem, while his secondary aim is to explain and expound Nietzsche with the utmost compactness and simplicity. Given the author's characteristic views of nineteenth-century history and of the biographic art, he may be said to have admirably succeeded: the book goes like a breeze and its scant 250 pages tax neither patience nor understanding. Yet because of these characteristic views, I doubt whether the main problem has been solved. I doubt whether the Nietzsche who emerges from this treatment will help those who are genuinely confused about him. On Mr. Brinton's assurance, Nietzsche will be classed as an unsuccessful neurotic who had a few good insights into the behavior of human beings, but who covered them up with contradictory epigrams and egotistical chatter that have enabled the Nazis to make the most of his name and authority. But is not this view already common property?

The biographer tells us that he is no Nietzschean and he half admits, half reveals, that he is something of a Freudian. There is no reason why this distinction should interfere with sound biography, but one wishes that the narrator's point of view were more clearly defined. One would then know what to make of his hypotheses and innuendoes, ascriptions of national traits and diagnosis of psychopathic ones. In one place, he says most truly: "It is a mistake, common to idealist and materialist alike, to suppose that men are driven by interests to the exclusion of ideals, or by ideals to the exclusion of interests." It seems as if in order to avoid falling in with either, Mr. Brinton had decided to be each by turns. When Nietzsche attacks the Germans it is suggested that the motive may have been their neglect of him; when Nietzsche acts interestedly towards his publishers the lack of idealism is pointed out as detracting from the picture of the "great man." Similarly, the biographer takes sides for or against the ways of the nineteenth century, depending on whether Nietzsche criticizes or adopts them. This presentation no doubt sets off Nietzsche as a queer duck, but it implies as a standard of comparison a man—or rather a biographer's dummy—such as never was on land or sea.

In handling the ideas of the time and the philosopher, Professor Brinton, acting no doubt under limitations of space, makes some other regrettable omissions. He never deals, for example, with Nietzsche's method of contradiction. He points to it and to its dangers, and he shows that polemical needs partly account for it, but he leaves the impression that Nietzsche was not aware of his own constant practice—a practice, however, which explains not only Nietzsche but also the most fruitful thinking of the late nineteenth century. In general, except for a few excellent summaries and some references to Vaihinger and James, Mr. Brinton leaves Nietzsche too isolated from the intellectual difficulties of his period. The Darwin-Nietzsche relation is skimped, and we are not enlightened by hearing of the zoölogist Rütimeyer's "not very fruitful" return to Lamarckian evolution, in which "he anticipated Shaw"—as if Samuel Butler had never lived and as if Darwin himself had not, with many others in the sixties, retreated from Natural Selection to Lamarckism. Schopenhauer, again, and Rousseau, and Romanticism are referred to as if their meaning were generally and clearly known and would shed light on Nietzsche's. Since the opposite is true, it is no wonder the reader is brought up rather short with a temperate conclusion dealing with the issues of the present war of ideas, but not making plain whether Nietzsche is a Maker of Modern Europe in any creative sense or merely as an inditer of opinions partly usable by National Socialists.

To be sure, attention to these considerations would have required more elbow room and a slower pace. They would have made Nietzsche more amiable, perhaps more important, certainly less jerky and maniacal. But in Mr. Brinton's able hands, this need not have made the book any duller. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the convenient shortcut of amateur psychiatry and intellectual Gibbonism which the author has taken has not brought his work too near to the genre made popular twenty years ago by Lytton Strachey—a genre which has its own graces and merits and does convey valuable information of a certain kind, but which has aged much faster than its perpetual laughter and systematic lightness of touch would have led one to suspect.

*Jacques Barzun's new work, "Darwin, Marx, Wagner—the Fatal Legacy of 'Progress'" has just gone to press.*



*From the painting by C. Stoeving*
**Frederick William Nietzsche**

## ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Psmith, in "Leave It to Psmith," by P. G. Wodehouse.
2. Sam Williams, in "Penrod and Sam," by Booth Tarkington.
3. M. Loisel, in "The Necklace," by Guy de Maupassant.
4. Mrs. Frank Kennedy (Scarlett O'Hara), in "Gone With the Wind," by Margaret Mitchell.
5. Theodore Gumbril, Jr., in "Antic Hay," by Aldous Huxley.
6. Roger and Helen Mifflin, in "The Haunted Bookshop," by Christopher Morley.
7. Conkey Chickweed, in "Oliver Twist," by Charles Dickens.
8. The Duke of Bilgewater, in "Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain.
9. Parthenia Hawks, in "Show Boat," by Edna Ferber.
10. "Lysistrata," by Aristophenes.



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# No *normal* man can afford to disregard this book

WHETHER it is *erotica* or *literature* is something that only time can tell. Some critics have resented its frankness and its theme, but they have been in the minority. With few exceptions this book has been accepted as a powerful story of human aberration, told with delicacy and good taste. *John Cowper Powys,* for instance, says: "I believe that it is overpowering and profoundly true. It is the work of pure genius." *Marianne Hauser,* of the *New York Times Book Review,* adds: "In writing of erotic abnormalities he has to struggle against tradition and traditional tact . . . there is color, dramatic strength and strange unforgettable passion." And the *N. Y. Herald Tribune Books* says: "Explores the vast canyons of abnormality with heart and mind as well . . . The intention of the author is to show that abnormality and normality are divided by a shadow, not a stone wall."

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## FASHIONS IN DEFEATISM

*(Continued from page 4)*

technical questions because they have little to say otherwise, and they sneer at the great writers of the past, as Henry James used to say that Tolstoy was not worth reading, as Eliot prefers to Milton a dozen obscure metaphysical poets. To exalt the inferior over the great, in the name of their technical virtues, is a way of defending their own weakness; and Gertrude Stein has reduced their position to the last absurdity. In her theory of esthetics, neither thought nor feeling matters. Nothing counts but the word-pattern, and the greatest thing in life is a nursery-jingle.

You know this is infantile, and in fact it seems to me that most of our current literature is written by adolescent minds. Mencken has remained a boy. The brag and bluster of Hemingway speak for a boy—certainly a very gallant boy; so do Thomas Wolfe's poetic gropings; so does the cult of "Huckleberry Finn," uniquely a book of boys, for boys, by a boy. Our novelists seldom picture developed types; and, if Eliot exalts the minor poets over the major poets, is it not because he does not feel the major emotional problems? If this is the case, what is the reason but a lack of the sort of attachments, to the family, to the soil, to public life, that develop the sense of responsibility and, with this, maturity of mind?

Let me add that the writers I have mentioned have felt this problem; they have all, in one way or another, struggled with it, and that is why, among us, they are eminent writers. But even if they, the eminent, are adolescent—because of the conditions of our time—what shall we say of the rank and file, who are boys without the genius? The great cry of this age is that we should "face life"; but facing life means in many cases evading the most important elements of life. The world has seemed so difficult to writers, it has seemed so sinister and fearful, that to keep their personalities alive they have thrown the cargo over the side to save the ship. Their lives have been narrowed and desiccated, and they have remained emotionally shallow.

So it appears that the mood of these writers is a kind of inverted idealism. Their harsh incredulity is the measure of their potential faith; and when I think of the loose talk about "high ideals" that governed the general mind when I was a boy, and that went hand in hand with so many abuses, it seems to me that this turn of thought should prove in the end beneficial, creative of all that it misses. The ideal has often been maintained by those who have denied it in their youth; and, while there are no Saint Augustines in my generation, or any John Bunyans that I know of, I think the mind of the country, as a whole, has had its adolescence in our time—old as the sections were, the South, New England. It has gone through terrible growing pains, but the nation will be, in consequence, more mature. It is a good thing, surely, that young people now are so exacting, so wary of hypocrisy and humbug. And is there not a visible reaction against the defeatist mind, and against these parasites and air-plants, who have thriven in a discouraged world, as Spanish moss thrives on decaying trees?

I SEE on all sides a hunger for affirmations, for a world without confusion, waste, or groping, a world that is full of order and purpose, and for ourselves, in America, a chance to build it. When Europe too had its chance, and Americans were hankering for Europe, William James wrote, "Europe has been made what it is by men staying in their homes and fighting stubbornly, generation after generation, for all the beauty, comfort and order they have got. We must abide and do the same." Europe still has its chance, no doubt; but Europe is reaping whirlwinds far worse than ours and has lost the charm for us that it once possessed. It has thrown us back upon ourselves, and America has risen immensely in its power to charm us. Thousands of novels, biographies, and histories, published in recent years, have shown us what multifarious strivings and failures and what multifarious victories lie behind us; and young writers now are settling in the remotest regions, determined to find them interesting or make them so. You never hear now of Greenwich Village, which used to be a haven for the exiles from Alabama and Kansas, the West and the South; and the reason you never hear of it is that the exiles have gone back to Alabama and to Kansas. They are founding schools in Iowa City and writing novels about Montana, and some are poet-farmers in Vermont. They are cultivating their roots where the seeds were sown, and where they are sure to yield their flowers and fruit.

*The foregoing article is a preview of Van Wyck Brooks's new book, "On American Literature," to be published April 1 by E. P. Dutton & Co.*



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# Photographer Plus

*I WITNESS. By Norman Alley. New York: Wilfred Funk.* 370 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by LINTON WELLS

THIRTY years ago, Norman Alley went to work for the *Chicago Tribune* as a copy boy. His ambition was to become a reporter. Then he decided that "a picture is worth 10,000 words" and became a photographer. His autobiographical "I Witness" seems to justify the shift. Alley has demonstrated his right to an honored niche in the newsreel photographer's hall of fame. "I Witness" is good writing but poor reporting, even of his own courageous exploits.

Norman Alley's first newsreel feat was to photograph the Eastland steamship disaster in Chicago in July, 1915. His last (recorded) was to depict on celluloid the German army's invasion of the Low Countries and France.

In between these assignments, Alley was under fire with Pershing's Mexican expedition and a member of the Army Signal Corps, chronicling AEF activities in France. For 13 years thereafter, he covered football games, prize fights, prohibition raids, and gangster activities, and September, 1932, found him marooned on the coast of Greenland, after an ill-fated attempt to fly the Atlantic.

Several "prosaic years" of picture chasing followed this adventure, then, in 1937, Universal Newsreel jumped Alley to China and fame. He was aboard the United States Yangtsze River Gunboat *Panay* when it was bombed by Japanese airplanes and his exclusive cinematographic record of this inexcusable act of aggression enabled the United States Government to force an apology and indemnity from Japan. Alley's "I Witness" account of his splashing through the blood which flowed in the wake of Japanese aggression against China is the most interesting part of his autobiography and covers almost one-third of its contents.

After the *Panay* incident, Alley returned to more peaceful photographic pursuits in Los Angeles. Then came the war and Hearst's Newsreel sent him to Berlin. This part of "I Witness" is little short of dull, even though Alley was in Holland when the Nazis invaded the Low Countries. He went through the bombings of Holland and bicycled through Belgium and part of France in the wake of the German army, but about all you learn is that German successes were achieved through "foul trickery."

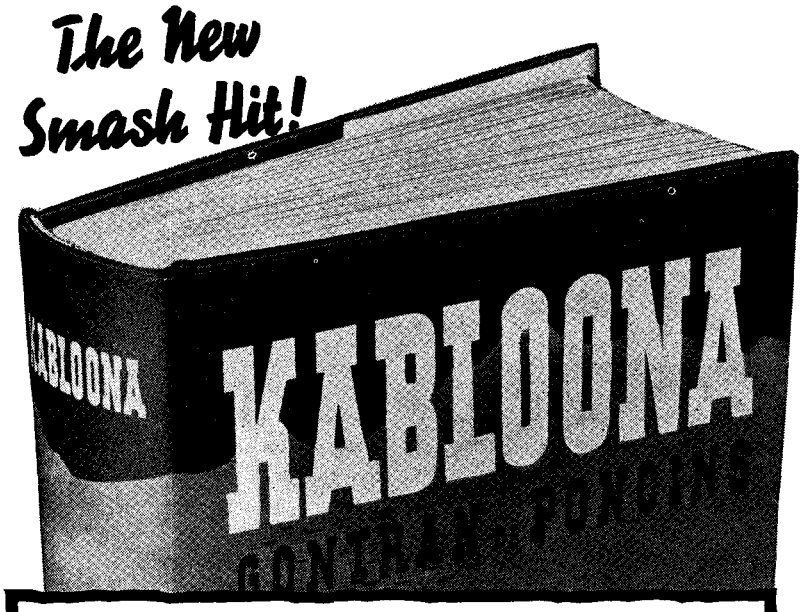
After the collapse of France, Alley went back to Berlin, then came home to America, bringing with him the conviction that the German people are behind Hitler because they feel they have everything to gain and nothing to lose; that the subjugated nations will overthrow their present masters; and that democracy will triumph.

The impression left with the reader is that Mr. Alley was bored with his own life before and after the *Panay* adventure.

It is unfortunate that the publishers did not illustrate "I Witness" with some of the author's notable photographs.

It is also unfortunate that the author chose "I Witness" as a title, because it definitely conflicts with a recently published volume titled "Eye Witness," written by members of the Overseas Press Club.

*Linton Wells is a news commentator for the Columbia Broadcasting System.*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# Science and the Future

*THE SOCIAL RELATIONS OF SCIENCE. By J. G. Crowther. New York: The Macmillan Co.* 1941 665 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CLIFFORD C. FURNAS

IN two of his previous books, "Men of Science" and "Famous American Men of Science," Mr. Crowther presented outstanding accounts of the men, and their works, who were the principal figures in scientific development in the English speaking world. Those two books were not only good writing—they were good reading.

In "The Social Relations of Science" the historic approach still holds. The author takes up the history of significant ideas in science, and of important advances in experimental science and technology. He shows how they affected the social pattern and how the social pattern in turn affected the course of science. There are some slightly acrid effusions put in for the purpose of smoking the isolated academic purist out of his ivory tower. Then there are statements which attempt to outline what should be done. This attempt is disappointing—at least to the reviewer.

The author's political leanings are certainly not toward the conservative side, or he would never have written this book. From his introductory material one would gather that he believes that the future must bring some sort of advanced socialism which will really work. Although a quotation out of context is often unfair, it is probably safe to assume that the following paragraphs indicate his idea of the proper shape of things to come:

> What will bring a return to increasing freedom? A method of establishing it by habit and law might be discovered in which all capital and big machinery is owned by the state, but the state itself is governed by a purely political organization. No concrete counters for freedom would be employed. Contemporary events show the difficulty of governing this sort of state without a powerful police.
>
> On the one side there is private ownership, spiritual vulgarity, and some independence; on the other there is communal ownership, moral dignity, and police supervision.

A review which deals only with the tone to the exclusion of the content of a book is certainly inadequate. So be it known that there are eightythree short chapters between the covers. The first is "Why Science Exists," the last "The Social Responsibilities of Scientists." Sampling at random in between one finds, Magic, Origin of Greek Theoretical Speculations, The Decline of Science at Alexandria, Rotary Power Machines, The International Collapse of a Social Order Based on Slavery, The Shape of Western Civilization Is Forged, Roger Bacon and Medieval Experimental Science, Clocks and Mills, Metal Mining, The Growth of Universities, Science and Freedom, The New Slave, The Raw Material of Everything. You can see that the volume covers a great deal, and (confidentially) it covers it well, it reads easily, and there are no prerequisites of credits in science courses. A great deal of scientific, technical, and historical information is presented and the author's interpretation of the interconnections is worth grasping. There is a well-selected bibliography at the end of each chapter, and a good index.

Everyone who has the slightest interest in the world as it is and will be, should have a shelf of books covering science and its social relations and impacts. This shelf would contain only the really significant books that have appeared in recent years, so it shouldn't be five feet long yet; only about eighteen inches. He should push the earlier volumes over to make room for Crowther's "The Social Relations of Science."

*Clifford C. Furnas is associate professor of chemistry at Yale University.*

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# Easy Come, Easy Go

*ANGLE OF EARTH AND SKY. By David Morton. New York: The Macmillan Company.* 1941. 88 *pp.* $1.75.

*POEMS AND PORTRAITS. By Christopher La Farge. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc.* 1941. 63 *pp.* $1.25.

*THE GLASS-BLOWER AND OTHER POEMS. By Jan Struther. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company.* 1941. 67 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THESE three volumes are among the best of their kind, but their kind is not of the best. It is the kind of poetry which is easy to read and easy to forget; sometimes it seems even easier to write than to read. It commits few blunders of taste and creates no problems in technique; it has the approved combination of fancy and fluency, explicitness and grace, lightness and gravity. It has almost everything except the power of poetry.

David Morton's new collection is a good example, an anthology of the best intentions and the not-quite-achieved. All the best properties are here: the simplicities of nature pitted against the complexities of man; the virtues of New England maples and Saint Francis of Assisi; the uncertainty of love and the dependability of daffodils, the impetus of summer and song. Unfortunately, the reader has heard it all before—heard it in the very same accents. Everything is so anticipated, so well routined, that the mind, no longer hoping for surprise, relaxes and is lulled to sleep by the soothing syllables. There is something to be said for poetry as an anodyne, but a poet should be the last one to say it. In the first few pages of "Angle of Earth and Sky" there is a parade of tried and true (or tried and found wanting) clichés; for example, "delicate flower," "passing bird," "soft disguise," "waiting silence," "golden air," "waving grasses." As teacher, no less than as poet, Mr. Morton knows better. He knows that when a poem is too easily come by it is scarcely worth holding. It is sometimes better to let it go with as little effort as it came.

Mr. La Farge has a little more respect for his material, but not much. He goes to some pains to particularize his settings, pointing up the scene, whereas Mr. Morton's landscape is one vast vague "loveliness." But he, too, cannot lift his lines above the traditional images, the worn effects, the rhetoric that promises sonority but ends flatly. The portraits and personal tributes are accomplished in a small way; the Washington Birthday speech is a thumping hortatory catalogue that just misses being ironic; the sonnets just miss being impressive. "There is depth," say Mr. La Farge's publishers, "which seems to be lacking in most of the young moderns." After which this ancient reviewer (as well as the young moderns) might well ask "Where?"

Mrs. Struther's program is less ambitious than either Mr. Morton's or Mr. La Farge's, but her performance is far more successful. Twisting the neck of sentiment, she avoids sentimentality; without straining for originality she attains distinction. This is due to a way of dealing with familiar things as though they were being observed for the first (or, at most, the third) time; of not taking flowers, or a street, or the reader, or Beauty too much for granted. The blend of wit and fancy, of feminine discernment and unassuming distinction which characterized "Mrs. Miniver," is in these poems. It is distilled in the meditative "Intimations of Immortality in Early Middle Age," in the picturesque "Stallions in the Strand," the curt "R. I. P.", which out-Parkers Dorothy, the slight but savage "At a Dull Party," and the nimbly metaphysical "The Coach." The "idea" of each of these poems is anything but cosmic; the subject matter is easily found and easy enough to expand. But Mrs. Struther has overcome the temptation to inflate or falsify just as she has overcome the too ready response to rhyme and unreason, to small animals and spring. Even when she summons the perennial passions she manages to escape stereotyping them; she speaks of "the long campaign of love."

Verse as modest as Mrs. Struther's often becomes more than it attempts to be. In its quiet, seldom lifted tone of voice it has authority and, what is more surprising, it has surprise.

**SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 364)**

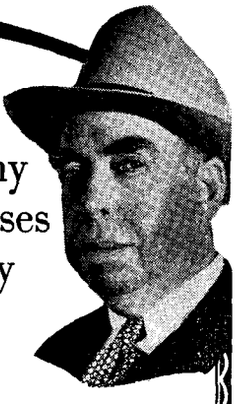
WALT WHITMAN

*LEAVES OF GRASS**

Yet we walk, unheld, free . . . . . .
journeying up and down, till we
make our ineffaceable mark
upon time and diverse eras,
Till we saturate time and eras, that
the men and women of races,
ages to come, may prove
brethren and lovers, as we
are.

*(To Him That Was Crucified: pub. 1860)


ROBERT BENCHLEY
SAYS
"The kind of autobiography every newspaperman promises himself he'll write one day —but can't"



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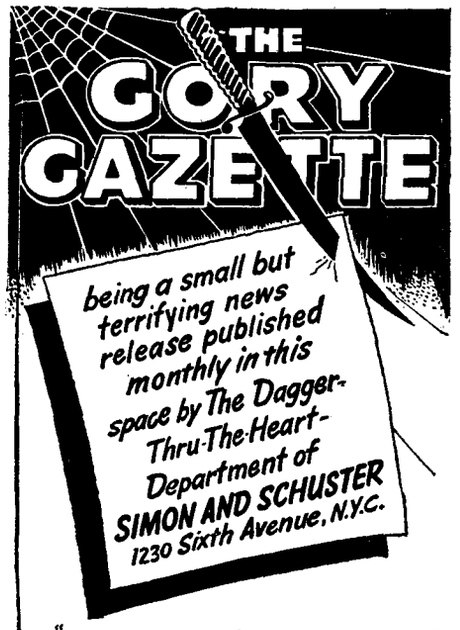
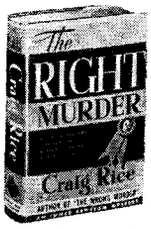

THE
GORY
GAZETTE
being a small but terrifying news release published monthly in this space by The Dagger-Thru-The-Heart-Department of
SIMON AND SCHUSTER
1230 Sixth Avenue, N.Y.C.

We cornered the senior Gossip Columnist (No. 21W, a small, nervous man who covers the 52nd Street route) and barked: "Why don't you dig up some hot news? You're getting away with murder."

"Sure I am," he admitted shamelessly, "if you mean *The Right Murder* by Craig Rice. I didn't know anyone saw me pinch that advance copy, and now that I've read it I don't care. It's terrific."




"It is interesting to discover that you can read," we said bitterly, "but that hardly comes under the head of exciting gossip. Give us something we can print in *The Gory Gazette* for the Paying Customers."

"All right," said 21W. "Here are a few items I picked up from Craig Rice. See which of them looks hot."

→ 1. The recent middle-aisling of Jake Justus and Helene Brand has gone pht-t-t. Bermuda honeymoon ends in separate planes!

→ 2. Is John J. Malone, Chicago's notorious mouthpiece, slipping? Private sources reveal that the playboy lawyer is being held incommunicado in connection with the recent knifing in Joe the Angel's Bar.

→ 3. What's keeping the hottest story of the year off Chicago's front pages? Can it be that socialite Mona McClane buys off all the boys? And is that why nobody's heard about the mysterious gent found in Mona's bedroom with a knife in his back?

"Great stuff," we said. "Get Craig Rice in here to give us the whole story."

No. 21W snickered. "You've already got it. Maybe you ought to practice up on *your* reading. Go get yourself a copy of

AN INNER SANCTUM MYSTERY

**THE RIGHT MURDER**
***by Craig Rice ($2)***


# THE NEW BOOKS

## Art

*THE STRUCTURE OF ART. By Carl Thurston. University of Chicago Press.* 1941. 190 *pp.* $2.50.

Mr. Thurston has wisely confined the analytical part of his small but meaty book to the spatial arts—architecture, sculpture, painting, and the allied graphic arts. His analysis proceeds in that order—with the logical advantage of passing from the use of multiple and very complicated space to space that is merely suggested and inferential. This procedure makes a well-knit and exceptionally clear book.

Ultimately, as Mr. Thurston clearly perceives, the existence and the organization and structure of any work of art are only the potentiality of an esthetic experience. Such a potentiality may be quite variously realized in experience, may be misrealized, may remain unrealized.

When he approaches the constructive and psychological task of studying the esthetic experience itself, Mr. Thurston insists that time, sometimes much, sometimes little, is always involved. All the arts are temporal arts —"art needs to be studied in terms of relationships and fluid processes." The distinguishing mark of esthetic as differenced from kindred experiences, may be a sort of intensification and condensation which squeezes the time element out and results in an illusion of unity and timeliness, which may constitute a kind of knowledge.

On the issue of content and meaning, Mr. Thurston takes a sound humanistic position against the many estheticians who hold the experience of beauty is possible only in some radiant vacuum. He writes: "The greatest art can be produced only by men who are both complex and intense, and it is almost inevitable that the experiences which they offer us should contain at least as much life as art."

Space does not permit any further analysis of a work that is as important as it is concise and stimulating. While it is addressed rather to mature art lovers than to students, it would be hard to imagine a more useful text book for college classes.

F. J. M., Jr.

# The Criminal Record

### The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

| *Title and Author* | *Crime, Place, and Sleuth* | *Summing Up* | *Verdict* |
|---|---|---|---|
| OUR SECOND MURDER<br>*Torrey Chanslor*<br>(Stokes: $2.) | Viperish society girl choked with diamond necklace at posh party guarded by trio of elderly female detectives. They solve it handily. | Aged but agile threesome may almost overcome certain objections to this type of sleuth. Gets twittery at times, but finishes well. | Pretty fair |
| BERMUDA BURIAL<br>*C. Daly King*<br>(Funk: $2.) | Ruthlessly pertinacious kidnapers follow rich child, under Mike Lord's protection, to Bermuda, where they get her—and he gets them. | Starts swiftly, but island languor pervades action and sleuthing until crisp final section when Lord really gets down to business. | Average |
| THE RIGHT MURDER<br>*Craig Rice*<br>(Simon & Schuster: $2.) | Gent skewered near Chicago dive yelps for lawyer Malone who obliges, with Jake Justus and wf., and effectively trails triple slayer. | High alcoholic content, plus marital fracases of Justuses, Malone's really clever sleuthing, and hilariously exciting situations make this one hum. | A-No. 1 |
| SPILL THE JACKPOT!<br>*A. A. Fair*<br>(Morrow: $2.) | Donald Lam learns about love and slot-machines in search for vanished fiancee of rich Californian and killer of ex-pugilist. | Diminutive but dauntless detective, whose "pitching" is full of curves, untangles, at racing pace, case that boils with action and fun. | Extra good |
| COUNTERPOINT MURDER<br>*G. D. H. and Margaret Cole*<br>(Macmillan: $2.) | Scotland Yard shelves inexplicable braining of London executive until elderly spinster's envenoming, and hit-run death give Supt. Wilson surprising answer. | In true magician style authors "explain" story in opening chapter, but most readers won't guess solution 'til very end. | Excellent |
| DEATH FLIES WEST<br>*James Francis Bonnell*<br>(Scribner's: $2.) | Counter-espionage on trans-Atlantic clipper leads Bill Parker, foreign correspondent, into sleuthing three altitude murders. | Flying-boat atmosphere good. Story repetitious; living characters bloodless. | No gimp |



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## Fiction

*ROAD LEADING SOMEWHERE. By Ursula Parrott. Dodd, Mead.* 1941. 171 *pp.* $2.

A very charming, sensitive, and solemn young woman named Sandra; a very rich, handsome, and shiftless young man named Bradley; and, fortunately, another young man—named Jeffrey—ardent, ambitious, and talented, contrive as well as they can to keep Miss Parrott's latest story moving. Sandra has loved Bradley for five years; she is aware of his failings; she is hurt when he puts off their marriage for another two years in order that he may continue to enjoy his freedom; she even quarrels with him when he takes up with a professional Southern charmer. But she can't stop loving him. A series of pretty drastic emotional shocks is necessary to bring her to real understanding and to show her where her true happiness lies. F. S.

*FAN DANCE AT COCKROW. By Daniel Carson Goodman. Wilfred Funk.* 1941. 336 *pp.* $2.50.

If a prize were offered for the most strenuous, tormented, agitated, pulsating novel of the year, this would be a certain contender. Here is enough plot for half a dozen novels, enough climaxes and crises for a whole season of sultry repertory. There are at least six protagonists: Peter, a phoney young liberal miserably moping and groping about in Waste Land; Dudley, a chubby, pathetic millionaire, victim of a mother-complex; Jerry, a wealthy lecher who preys upon his own daughter-in-law. The women are astonishing if not convincing.

The machine-gun tempo and deluge of events leave the reader breathless. If style is the man, we learn little about Dr. Goodman, for he shifts from the turgidity of Elinor Glyn to the sparkling satire of "Babbitt." Lewis could not better the account of the convention at Atlantic City and the shrewd analysis of the empty consolations of the Boosters' way of life. Yet within half a page one finds such tumid phrasing as "His meals were eaten in a delirium of loneliness," "Lovesickness waved its stalking firebrand in his face," "It had become a habit to think of his bed as a mortuary couch," etc. R. A. C.

*SINGING BEACH. By Elizabeth Foster. Harpers.* 1941. 309 *pp.* $2.50.

For vividness and ease with which Miss Foster creates a landscape, a climate, and a group of human beings, there is no other word than "talent." Her book, with its color, its humor, and its evocation of reality, is in many ways a very charming one. To a remarkable degree, and in spite of the heightened, romantic quality of its mood, it is true to life.

Camel Island, Miss Foster assures us, is a "fabulous island. It cannot be found on any map of the Maine coast." For all that, it is the real thing, and it rocks, its beaches, its dark woods that come almost to the water's edge, its blue lupines, its weather-beaten summer cottages, and the really very nice and well-bred people who live in them, are extraordinarily actual.

Three quarters of the book unfold most satisfactorily, when, all at once, something happens to it. It becomes overcharged, even, at moments, a bit cheap; and one reflects, unhappily, that the story, after all, would make an undistinguished moving picture. Without the warmth and reality of Miss Foster's writing, with the highly individualized characters translated into stock types, the book's qualities would be submerged by the faint sensationalism that creeps into its later pages. It is however, a novel beautifully begun, and beautifully ended. N. I.

*THE MILLION. By Robert Hichens. New York: Doubleday, Doran.* 1941. 301 *pp.* $2.50.

Mr. Hichens always knows what he's doing. A great many authors of light novels tend to get them so light that it is harder for the reader to keep his mind on them than on a logarithm table. Not Mr. Hichens. Frivolous but full-bodied enough to move under its own power "The Million" is an agreeably characteristic product, the story of a very likable English widow, bored to death with her routine existence in a Devonshire village, and suddenly offered the chance to escape into what she believes is a more congenial life by winning a million francs in a French lottery. Off to Cairo she goes with her leaden and self-righteous daughter, and there for a winter season she drinks thirstily of worldliness and gaiety. A misunderstanding for which she isn't responsible but which she does nothing to correct at first simplifies her social conquests and then threatens them. Believed to be a millionairess in pounds sterling, rather than in French francs, she does her best to behave like one until, almost broke, she finds herself seriously out on a limb. Because she is neither stupid nor insensitive she handles her problem very cleanly and bravely, and it is with the reader's complete approval that her virtue brings, in time, its just reward. F. S.

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# TRADE WINDS

SPRING NOTE: We came across a little publication called *About Books*, issued quarterly at the Olin Library, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn. (Energetic Raymond T. Bond, that Dodd, Mead man, sent it to us.) Within its sprightly pages is this Spring tonic: A Negro woman in a hospital not a million miles from Wesleyan had such a voracious appetite for mushy, sentimental novels that she kept the hospital librarian busy. She was discharged as cured, but returned, with a relapse, some months later. The library worker, remembering her tastes, said: "I'm sure I've got just the book for you—a new love story by Kathleen Norris." The reply was emphatic: "No, *ma'am*. Ah don' want no more of dat love stuff. I'se tried it. What ah wants now is *murder!*" ☞Now if the patient is still in the hospital we'd like to suggest that Mr. Bond forward a copy of Agatha Christie's new *The Patriotic Murders*. To this crime addict it's a lulu. And should we add it bears the Dodd, Mead imprint?

★ ★

☞We like the idea. Here is Bennett Cerf, president of Random House, having a book published by Garden City Publishing Company. It is *Sixteen Famous American Plays*, and Van H. Cartmell has helped Mr. Cerf edit it. Offhand we're wondering if this doesn't mark some sort of precedent for one publisher to do a book and have another publisher do the printing? An enterprise of this sort presents intriguing possibilities. ☞What kind of arguments can one publisher give another if he wants a bigger advertising appropriation on his book? Did Mr. Cerf think the advance generous enough? And we'd like the president of Random House to tell us. ☞All in all the book is an excellent one; it is an original publication and sells for $1.98.

★ ★

☞To Harcourt, Brace & Company should go some sort of prize or medal for distinguished enterprise in the field of literature. Together with Bermann-Fischer Verlag publications (now in Stockholm) they are now publishing in German the magnificent works of many German refugee writers. News of this sort should and will bring much joy to those thousands of men and women who have come to our shores in search of a free existence. ☞Among the important writers to appear in the Bermann-Fischer imprint are Thomas Mann, Franz Werfel, Martin Beheim-Schwarzbach, and Alfred Doblin. But in addition to these German authors there will be English and American writers whose works will be translated into German and thus make available to German readers the best works of these countries. Aldous Huxley, R. C. Hutchinson and Irwin Edman are now available in German.

★ ★

☞One of the important books headed for the bookstores and the Book-of-the-Month Club readers is Winston Churchill's *Blood, Sweat, and Tears*, due April 14. ☞We are the last to suggest to any publisher, let alone the able Putnam Company, what they should do, but we're wondering whether or not Churchill has added or will add another chapter to *Blood, Sweat, and Tears* about the Lend-Lease Bill, and its meaning for the English people.

Or are we 'way off?

★ ★

☞A group of friends and admirers of the late James Joyce has just issued an appeal for contributions to a Joyce Memorial Fund, the entire sum of which will be forwarded to the great writer's family, now stranded in Europe, without means of support. St. Patrick's Day has just rolled by and we feel certain that Joyce's many thousands of friends here will be anxious to respond. Mary Colum, B. W. Huebsch, and Thornton Wilder are among the signers to this appeal. Contributions may be addressed to the Joyce Memorial Committee, 1049 Park Avenue, New York City.

★ ★

☞The Index to *Print* has just reached our desk and though one must admit it is hard to review or glamorize an Index, one can't help going through it just to recall some of the pleasant and instructive minutes spent with *A Quarterly Journal of The Graphic Arts*. Louis J. Ansbacher's "Textbook Design" in Volume 1, is the piece we recall instantly. This handsome quarterly should have a long reign. *The Colophon* has departed from the ranks of fine printing, and book collectors, publishers, artists are fortunate indeed to have *Print*.

★ ★

☞Cecil Goldbeck, editor of Coward-McCann, has just been appointed Vice-President of that house. Speaking of Coward-McCann, one of their authors, Joseph Coffin (*Our American Money* and *Coin Collecting*), has been named by President Roosevelt as a member of the Annual Assay Commission, which met last month at the Philadelphia. ☞What strikes us as funny or something is word from San Leandro, California, that the City Council has passed a unanimous resolution thanking Charles Edward Chapel for writing *Finger Printing: A manual of Identification*, and for the publicity this work has brought to the city. Say, wouldn't it be a nice publicity story if San Leandro was the first city in the whole world to be first in having every man, woman, and child fingerprinted?

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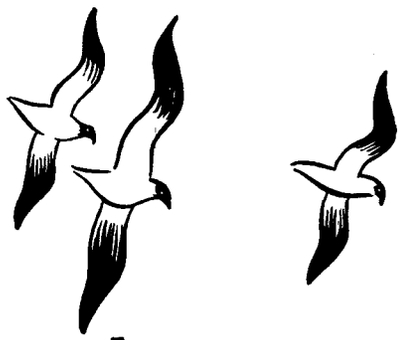
# Records in Review

**Edward Tatnall Canby**

SCHUMANN'S remark that "a Requiem is a thing one writes for oneself" is hardly true in the case of Verdi's *Requiem,* recently released by Victor in a splendid recording by the Rome Royal Opera Company (V M-734; $10). Verdi at sixty-one wrote this work as he entered an amazing creative period in the opera *Falstaff,* written when he was no less than eighty! And in truth the *Requiem* cannot be compared to others, for example the Brahms *German Requiem,* for in the solemn and terrible text Verdi saw principally dramatic material for another opera—without scenery. The music is melodramatic, to put it mildly. But to criticize the work on this account would be pointless; as stage opera it is superb, with more skill, less obviousness than can be found in the earlier Verdi operas. Illustrious soloists—Gigli, Pinza—top off a first-rate performance.

★ ★

It is a pity that Victor's Paderewski Golden Anniversary Album (M-748 $4.50) should include only the newer recording of that master, made when the swift decline so tragically apparent of late had already begun. Of greater interest, in spite of poor reproduction, would have been the many early recordings made in his late prime. And it seems strange that one-half the contents should be devoted to Mozart and Haydn, whose music is certainly not Paderewski's *forte.* Here is the record of a great artist's passing—no more. . . . The steadily increasing demand for Mozart and Haydn is one of the happiest omens in our musical scene, for their music is "pure" in the best sense—it cannot be understood and enjoyed under false pretenses. Following the 2-piano Sonata and the Clarinet Concerto comes a work of first importance, the 2-piano Concerto in Eb, K. 365, played by Jose and Amparo Iturbi, conducted by the former from the piano. Though the piano tone as recorded is rather hard and dry, this album must be noted as one of the first really good domestic Mozart offerings. . . . Helen Traubel, whose voice and musicianship were noted here recently, sings Schumann's intensely Schumannesque Song Cycle, *Frauenliebe und Leben,* (V M-737; $3.75) and in spite of a too-narrow range of tone and volume gives a moving and sincere interpretation of these difficult songs. Isabel French has recorded the same for Technichord, but I have not heard her performance. . . . Again Mr. Barbirolli's New York Philharmonic moves toward regaining its traditional position among the Finest, in a recording of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol* (C X-185; $2.50)—a piece which is about as Spanish as *Scheherezade* is oriental. Colorful is the usual word, and the Philharmonic's colors are reasonably

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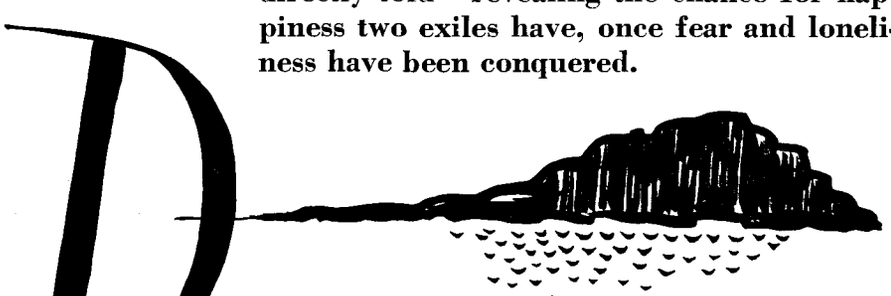

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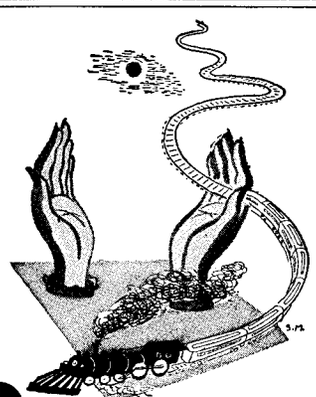

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# Double-Crostics: No. 365

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 - B | 2 - I | 3 - F | | 4 - U | 5 - Y | 6 - D | 7 - T | 8 - M | 9 - I | 10 - Q | 11 - V | | 12 - O | 13 - F | 14 - S | |
| 15 - R | 16 - Y | 17 - W | 18 - C | 19 - V | 20 - J | 21 - N | 22 - T | 23 - O | | 24 - N | 25 - F | 26 - K | 27 - G | 28 - A | | 29 - U |
| 30 - Z | 31 - R | 32 - T | 33 - J | | 34 - G | 35 - H | | 36 - R | 37 - P | 38 - A | 39 - B | 40 - G | 41 - C | 42 - Q | 43 - J | |
| 44 - S | 45 - H | | 46 - W | 47 - T | 48 - X | 49 - D | 50 - R | 51 - C | | 52 - I | 53 - F | | 54 - W | 55 - K | 56 - O | 57 - X |
| 58 - G | | 59 - T | 60 - K | 61 - F | | 62 - W | 63 - Z | 64 - I | | 65 - Q | 66 - O | 67 - H | 68 - F | | 69 - S | 70 - G |
| | 71 - D | 72 - J | 73 - Q | 74 - I | 75 - U | 76 - W | | 77 - C | 78 - O | | 79 - P | 80 - J | 81 - V | 82 - U | 83 - W | 84 - R |
| 85 - T | 86 - E | | 87 - D | 88 - Z | 89 - A | 90 - J | | 91 - S | 92 - K | 93 - O | | 94 - Y | 95 - F | 96 - T | | 97 - X |
| 98 - O | | 99 - B | 100 - N | 101 - X | | 102 - V | 103 - A | 104 - T | 105 - D | 106 - R | 107 - L | | 108 - B | 109 - H | | 110 - Y |
| 111 - A | 112 - X | 113 - B | | 114 - T | 115 - D | 116 - R | 117 - H | 118 - J | 119 - F | 120 - A | | 121 - K | 122 - J | 123 - B | | 124 - J |
| 125 - Y | 126 - D | 127 - G | 128 - L | 129 - S | 130 - C | | 131 - M | 132 - V | 133 - D | 134 - E | 135 - Y | | 136 - L | 137 - M | | 138 - U |
| 139 - K | 140 - N | 141 - X | 142 - W | 143 - E | 144 - Z | 145 - S | 146 - J | 147 - I | | 148 - R | 149 - P | 150 - N | 151 - L | 152 - K | 153 - D | |
| 154 - U | 155 - X | 156 - S | 157 - I | 158 - F | 159 - J | 160 - Z | 161 - H | 162 - L | 163 - E | | 164 - I | 165 - H | 166 - X | | 167 - P | 168 - Y |
| 169 - B | 170 - A | 171 - I | | 172 - G | 173 - A | | 174 - V | 175 - E | 176 - U | 177 - R | 178 - T | 179 - W | 180 - A | | 181 - Q | 182 - Y |
| 183 - N | 184 - J | 185 - M | 186 - E | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**DIRECTIONS**

*To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.*

*When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).*

**The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.**

**DEFINITIONS**

**A.** Gunpowder Plot conspirator.

**B.** Be grovelingly submissive (2 wds.)

**C.** Siouan Indian citizen of Oklahoma.

**D.** 26th President of the U. S.

**E.** American sanitation expert (Panama Canal) (1854-1920).

**F.** Income not hard to obtain (2 wds.)

**G.** Gymric sky god, giver of civilization (Celtic relig.)

**H.** Parthenon statue of a reclining god (among Elgin Marbles in Brit. Mus.)

**I.** State flower of Nevada.

**J.** Myopic.

**K.** God of Learning (Egypt).

**L.** Customary, ordinary.

**M.** One of the bellringers of the Herald Sq. statue, N. Y. City.

**N.** American critic and author (1882-).

**O.** Make subservient (feudal).

**P.** Sensational hits (slang).

**Q.** Euphemistic interjection for *God.*

**R.** Pardon.

**S.** Abundant.

**T.** Person or thing out-of-date (2 wds.) (colloq.)

**U.** Exalted, lofty.

**V.** Pitch headlong.

**W.** Things valued for scarcity or exceptional character.

**X.** Involute.

**Y.** Urged strongly.

**Z.** God of wisdom and magic (Egypt).

**WORDS**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. | 28 | 103 | 180 | 173 | 89 | 38 | 170 | 111 | 120 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| B. | 123 | 39 | 1 | 113 | 108 | 169 | 99 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| C. | 77 | 18 | 41 | 130 | 51 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| D. | 6 | 126 | 133 | 153 | 115 | 71 | 49 | 105 | 87 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| E. | 86 | 134 | 175 | 163 | 143 | 186 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| F. | 3 | 95 | 53 | 158 | 25 | 13 | 61 | 119 | 68 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| G. | 58 | 127 | 70 | 40 | 34 | 172 | 27 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| H. | 117 | 67 | 161 | 35 | 45 | 165 | 109 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| I. | 171 | 52 | 9 | 147 | 164 | 157 | 74 | 64 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| J. | 43 | 122 | 72 | 146 | 159 | 33 | 184 | 124 | 80 | 90 | 20 | 118 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| K. | 139 | 55 | 92 | 26 | 121 | 60 | 152 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| L. | 162 | 136 | 151 | 128 | 107 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M. | 8 | 185 | 131 | 137 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N. | 183 | 24 | 140 | 100 | 150 | 21 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| O. | 93 | 66 | 12 | 23 | 56 | 78 | 98 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| P. | 167 | 37 | 149 | 79 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Q. | 181 | 65 | 10 | 73 | 42 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| R. | 50 | 15 | 177 | 106 | 148 | 116 | 84 | 31 | 36 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| S. | 145 | 69 | 156 | 14 | 44 | 129 | 91 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| T. | 104 | 178 | 22 | 32 | 85 | 7 | 59 | 114 | 47 | 96 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| U. | 4 | 82 | 29 | 138 | 176 | 75 | 154 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| V. | 19 | 81 | 102 | 174 | 132 | 11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W. | 142 | 54 | 179 | 17 | 83 | 62 | 76 | 46 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| X. | 101 | 48 | 97 | 112 | 155 | 141 | 57 | 166 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Y. | 182 | 16 | 110 | 168 | 125 | 5 | 94 | 135 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Z. | 144 | 160 | 30 | 63 | 88 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



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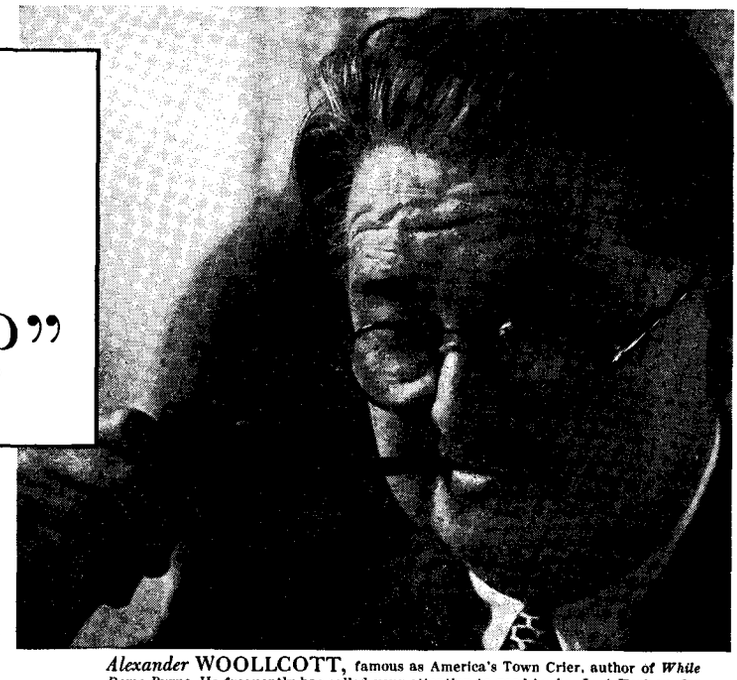

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